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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.

In response to a request for some account of the formation and work of the British Institute of Sacred Literature, Professor J. T. Marshall, of Manchester, one of those most active in bringing about its organization and upon whom the main responsibility and labor of conducting it has rested, has sent the following statement. This is accompanied by a neat circular explaining the plan and purpose of the British Institute and describing the courses offered. While this work in Great Britain has no organic connection with the American Institute, it is clearly the direct outgrowth of it. The same methods have been adopted and the same text books and instruction sheets are employed as in America. Those who are interested in the work on this side the water cannot fail to be interested in Professor Marshall's account, and to rejoice in the success which is attending the effort to extend the study of the Scriptures in the original languages on the other side of the sea :

"The formation of the *British Institute of Sacred Literature* owes its inception to the visit of Professor Harper to this country in 1891. His last public appearance during that visit was on the platform of the Baptist Union, whose autumnal session was held in Manchester, during the early days of October. Professor Harper's reputation secured for him, as a visitor, a most enthusiastic reception, and his vivid description of the splendid service done by the American Institute in arousing a zeal for biblical studies throughout the States was received with equal enthusiasm. There were doubtless, among the hundreds of Baptist ministers assembled, grave compunctions of conscience over youthful resolutions unfulfilled; distasteful reminiscences of neglected Hebrew Bibles, followed by a reactionary spasm of pious resolve to equip themselves more fully as ministers of the Word. Only such emotions could explain the immense outburst of applause which shortly afterwards greeted Dr. Maclaren's statement, that he and I had been persuaded by Professor Harper, if there were satisfactory indications that such a thing was desired, to attempt in some way to bring English ministers into connection with Professor Harper's educational system. The Baptist ministers gave their answers very significantly, and though the number of recruits from among them has not thus far fulfilled the promise of the augury, yet it was their enthusiasm which was interpreted to mean that the ministry of England is conscious of its need of further education in the biblical languages. Shortly afterwards a

paper appeared in *The Freeman* on "the Education of Ministers," pointing out that there is a considerable percentage of our ministers who have never had a college training, and that many who have enjoyed this advantage, have sadly neglected the original Scriptures—especially the Hebrew; and suggesting that education by correspondence was the most likely way of supplying this early deficiency. Similar papers appeared in *many* of the religious journals, and the consequence was, that almost two hundred letters were received from men of all denominations, asking what was going to be done, or suggesting what should be done. In view of all this, Dr. Maclaren and myself felt encouraged to enter into negotiations with Professor Harper, to be supplied with question-sheets from Chicago, while the work of examination was to be done in this country. When these preliminaries were completed, before launching the matter fully, it was decided to lift the matter off denominational lines, by seeking the coöperation of scholars of other persuasions. Dr. Thomson, of the Lancaster Independent College, and Professor W. F. Slater, M.A., of the Wesleyan College, Didsbury, both readily consented to coöperation; and the prospectus of the British Institute of Sacred Literature was issued under their names. There are now 54 students attached to the Institute. Every religious denomination has its representative, and they are scattered as far as the limits of our islands will permit. They are classified as follows: Hebrew, First Course, 18; Second, 7; Third, 7; Fourth, 2. Greek, First Course, 11; Second, 9.

"We are exceedingly grateful for the interest taken in our movement by the Editor of *The Expository Times*. It is probable that through his kind intervention, we may be able to report an important step in advance, when we are next asked to give an account of ourselves."